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Status of implementation of the information and communications technology strategy for the United Nations

Fifty-second report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the status of implementation of the information and communications technology (ICT) strategy for the United Nations (A/72/755/Rev.1). The Committee also had before it the first annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the information and communications technology strategy (A/72/151). During its consideration of the above-mentioned reports, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 26 April 2018. The Committee also had an exchange with the Audit Operations Committee.

2. The first annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the ICT strategy was issued prior to the main part of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. The Committee was informed that, pending consideration of the initial reports of the Secretary-General on management reform, entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: ensuring a better future for all" and "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: improving and streamlining the programme planning and budgeting process" (A/72/492 and A/72/492/Add.1), the Secretary-General had decided to defer submission of his own progress report, which was initially also due to be issued for consideration by the Assembly during the main part of its seventy-second session.

II. Management reform

3. The most recent report of the Secretary-General on management reform, entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: implementing a new

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management architecture for improved effectiveness and strengthened accountability" (A/72/492/Add.2), includes proposals for the establishment of a single Office of Information and Communications Technology through the consolidation of the Information and Communications Technology Division of the Department of Field Support and the existing Office of Information and Communications Technology in the Department of Management. The new Office is proposed to be established as a separate entity which would report to both the Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support. In that report, the Secretary-General also proposes to redeploy the ICT functions in support of operations in New York from the Office of Information and Communications Technology to the proposed Division of Administration of the Department of Operational Support.

4. In its related report on the Secretary-General's management reform proposals (A/72/7/Add.49), the Advisory Committee welcomed the proposed consolidation of the current Office of Information and Communications Technology and the current Information and Communications Technology Division of the Department of Field Support, which, in its view, was fully aligned with the ICT strategy. The Committee recommends that the ICT support operations at Headquarters be maintained within the proposed reorganized Office, and that the dual reporting arrangements, which may present some management challenges, be kept under review. The above reports are currently before the General Assembly. **The Advisory Committee notes that, subject to any decision that the General Assembly may take on the proposed reorganization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the ICT strategy may need to be updated accordingly.**

III. First annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the information and communications technology strategy

5. The first annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the ICT strategy was submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/238 B, in which the Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the Board of Auditors submit an annual progress report during the five-year implementation period of the ICT strategy.

6. The report of the Board contains its findings and recommendations on a wide range of subjects, including governance and leadership, implementation of strategic projects, information security, ICT assets, application and website management, enterprise help desk, defragmentation of ICT resources and global sourcing. The Advisory Committee discusses the findings and recommendations of the Board in the relevant paragraphs of section IV below. In considering the progress report of the Secretary-General, the Committee bore in mind the time elapsed between the issuance of the two reports.

7. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the first annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the ICT strategy. In the Committee's view, the report provides an independent assessment of the implementation of the strategy, with valuable insights into the areas in which progress is being made and those in which further change and improvement are needed.**

8. The Board indicates that, of the 23 recommendations made in its previous reports (A/67/651 and A/70/581), 2 (9 per cent) have been fully implemented and 21 (91 per cent) are under implementation. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the Board has issued a total of 37 recommendations since its first audit in 2012

(see A/67/651), 36 of which have been accepted and 1 partially accepted by the Secretariat. The report further indicates that, of the 37 recommendations, 2 have been assessed by the Board to be fully implemented and that the Secretariat will present evidence to the Board to support the closure of another 20. The remaining 15 recommendations are linked to the ongoing implementation of the ICT strategy and are under implementation. **The Advisory Committee notes with regret the low rate of implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors. It trusts that the outstanding recommendations of the Board will be implemented expeditiously.**

IV. Report of the Secretary-General on the status of implementation of the information and communications technology strategy for the United Nations

9. In his third progress report, the Secretary-General states that progress has been made in the first two and a half years of the implementation of the ICT strategy. The report provides a comprehensive update of the status of all key initiatives, as well as an overview of the management of ICT globally. A summary of implementation during the third year of the ICT strategy is provided in paragraph 8 of that report, including on issues related to governance, progress in the implementation of the strategic ICT projects, consolidation of ICT resources, information security, application management, global sourcing, asset management, ICT workforce and Umoja mainstreaming.

A. Governance, accountability and leadership

10. In its previous report on the status of implementation of the ICT strategy (see A/71/785, paras. 6–10), the Advisory Committee expressed its expectation that all Secretariat entities would implement the ICT strategy as endorsed by the General Assembly in section II of its resolution 69/262, as well as all the provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, including the requirement for the Office to review all ICT budgets and initiatives, regardless of funding source, prior to their submission to the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (see ST/SGB/2016/11, para. 2.2 (g)). In its resolution 71/272 B, the Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee that the Secretary-General provide, in his next progress report, a detailed update on progress achieved in ensuring the effective cooperation of all Secretariat entities in implementing the ICT strategy, as well as on compliance with the provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin.

11. Governance, accountability and leadership issues are discussed in paragraphs 8 to 12 of the report of the Board of Auditors. The Board noted that the above-mentioned Secretary-General's bulletin, which establishes structures and defines functions, roles, responsibilities and other elements that are crucial for implementing the ICT strategy,[1] was issued only in September 2016, almost two years after the promulgation of the revised strategy. The Board further noted that: (a) policies for delegation of authority and designation of staff members performing significant ICT functions had not been issued; (b) performance measures in the senior managers' compacts relating to the implementation of the ICT strategy were not specific enough

[1] Including for instance, establishment of the organizational structure and scope of activities of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, and the role and responsibilities of the Chief Information Technology Officer, the Regional Technology Centres, the Enterprise Application Centres and ICT units in the Secretariat.

to facilitate the objective measurement of performance; and (c) Secretariat entities had not prepared annual ICT workplans or established targets and monitoring mechanisms that would allow the Secretariat to ensure that departmental business plans were aligned with the ICT strategy and that the strategy was being implemented in compliance with General Assembly resolution 69/262.[2]

12. With regard to ICT policies, procedures and compliance (see A/72/151, paras. 34–40), the Board noted delays in the revision and promulgation of policies in several key areas, including information security, disaster recovery, cloud computing,[3] minimum security for websites, videoconferencing, mobile devices, email services and remote access systems, as well as in the implementation of the system that had been put in place to review, monitor and ensure compliance with ICT policies across all departments and duty stations.

13. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that all Secretariat departments and entities must fully comply with the ICT strategy of the United Nations, as endorsed by the General Assembly, and all provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology. The Committee further emphasizes the importance of ensuring that budgets and projects from all funding sources for all ICT initiatives and operations of the Secretariat are reviewed by the Office of Information and Communications Technology within existing governance structures before their submission to the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts. The Committee also recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide, in his next progress report, a detailed update on progress achieved in ensuring Secretariat-wide compliance with the provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin, including implementation of the related recommendations of the Board (see A/71/785, para. 9; and A/72/151, paras. 21 and 40).**

B. Implementation and monitoring of strategic information and communications technology projects

14. The Advisory Committee recalls that the ICT strategy is being implemented through 20 strategic ICT projects, as reported in the first progress report of the Secretary-General (see A/70/364 and A/70/364/Corr.1, annex I). Annex II to the third progress report of the Secretary-General provides an update on the status of implementation of the projects: 7 of the 20 projects were reported in the second progress report (A/71/400) as having been completed, and five additional projects are now reported as having been completed during the reporting period, with eight projects in progress. In his latest progress report, the Secretary-General further states that the Enterprise Project Management Office continues to monitor project implementation, and any changes to the projects are subject to review and approval by the project management board. Details on the modifications made to the projects are provided in annex II, section B, of the third progress report.

15. In its report, the Board of Auditors noted that the scope of the projects was modified in 10 of the 20 projects, and that, taking into account the revised timelines presented in the first progress report of the Secretary-General, six projects had been delayed beyond their expected completion dates. In addition, three projects, expected to be completed by March 2017, had achieved only a 65 to 70 per cent completion

[2] See also General Assembly resolutions 70/248 A, 65/259, 64/243 and 63/262, as well as A/62/793, A/62/793/Corr.1, A/62/793/Add.1, A/63/487, A/63/487/Corr.1 and A/63/487/Corr.2.

[3] The practice of using a network of remote servers hosted on the Internet, rather than a local server or a personal computer, to store, manage and process data. The Advisory Committee was informed that that the cloud computing policy had been endorsed in 2017 and revised in 2018.

rate. The Board of Auditors recommended that the Office of Information and Communications Technology not only track the project timelines closely but also monitor the cost of each of the strategic projects to ensure transparency and accountability for the substantial investments made by Member States. **The Advisory Committee regrets that the pace of the implementation of the ICT strategy decreased during the reporting period and stresses the need for a full and timely implementation of the ICT strategy. The Committee trusts that Secretary-General will include in his next report information on the costs of the eight strategic ICT projects that remain to be implemented.**

C. Modernization and transformation: update on key initiatives under phase one of the strategy

Enterprise support: Umoja

16. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the management of the core infrastructure of the enterprise resource planning system, Umoja, [4] has been outsourced to a commercial vendor, with the access layer being administered through the Enterprise Data Centres located in Valencia, Spain, and Brindisi, Italy. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide further information in his next report regarding the measures taken to ensure the protection and confidentiality of the data contained in the Umoja system (see paras. 17–21 below). The Committee reiterates that any direct project costs must be charged to the Umoja project budget and not to the budget of the Office of Information and Communications Technology.**

Information security

17. With regard to activities completed during the third year of the implementation of the ICT strategy, the report of the Secretary-General indicates that: (a) the 10-point ICT security action plan to strengthen information security across the Secretariat was implemented and transitioned to maintenance mode in 2017, resulting in more secure enterprise systems and applications in the Secretariat; (b) the Chief Information Technology Officer has led efforts to coordinate and promote the development of shared capacity to address cybersecurity threats directed at United Nations organizations, including the development of a shared threat intelligence platform, which allows participating organizations to share cybersecurity intelligence; and (c) as part of its risk mitigation activities, the Office continues its monitoring of the completion rate of the mandatory information security awareness training course and increased security threat communications (see A/72/755/Rev.1, para. 8 (h) and table 1).

18. Further details on information security and disaster recovery, including on planned activities, are provided in paragraphs 25–34 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is indicated that the threat level facing the United Nations has grown significantly since the endorsement of the ICT strategy. Furthermore, as a result of the continued lack of harmonization of ICT systems, services, programmes and resources, as well as insufficient ICT security capacity, the ICT landscape remains highly fragmented and is at a high risk of being attacked. The report states that in response to the evolving threats, a longer-term strategic road map for information security has been developed that would, inter alia: (a) build on and expand the scope of the initiatives of the 10-point action plan; (b) transform those initiatives into ongoing programmatic activities; (c) expand the objectives beyond addressing common deficiencies; and (d) institute accountability for recognizing the central role

[4] Umoja signifies "unity" in Swahili.

of the Chief Information Technology Officer as outlined in ST/SGB/2016/11, thereby ensuring compliance within the delegation of authority framework.

19. The report of the Secretary-General states that risk management has been strengthened to include an assessment of the assets to be protected, the possible threats to those assets and the consequences of such threats should they materialize. The report further states that the multiple systems used for buildings management, conference management and physical security are exposed to the same information security threats and are therefore now included in the information security risk assessment. The report of the Secretary-General highlights the cross-cutting nature of the information security programme and points out that increased susceptibility to information security risk will remain if ICT within the Organization remains fragmented, with a lack of harmonization and consolidation of applications, data centre support structures and operational activities.

20. With regard to information security governance issues, the report of the Secretary-General indicates that the Global Security and Architecture Section in the Global Services Division of the Office of Information and Communications Technology is responsible for the oversight and coordination of all information security activities within the Secretariat, and that information security management and security operations activities at the regional and local levels have been delegated to the Regional Technology Centres, and to the Department of Field Support for field missions. The report highlights the importance of transparency and information-sharing in managing information security activities: given the enterprise nature and interconnectedness of the Organization's networks and applications, security risks, incidents or breaches that occur in any Secretariat entity or location can have an impact on other parts of the Secretariat. The report also indicates that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/261, four additional P-4 posts to strengthen information security have been established in the Regional Technology Centres in New York, Bangkok, Nairobi and Geneva.

21. **While welcoming the implementation of the above-mentioned 10-point information security action plan and the establishment of a longer-term information security road map to address the evolving security threats, the Advisory Committee is concerned by the slow progress in reducing the fragmentation of the ICT landscape of the United Nations, and the resulting increase in the threat level facing the Secretariat (see paras. 26–27 below). The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General: (a) to establish Secretariat-wide central control over information security under the authority of the Chief Information Technology Officer and to ensure that the provisions of its resolution 69/262, as well as of the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Office of Information and Communications Technology, are fully complied with; and (b) to establish and enforce clear delegation of authority and accountability mechanisms for all aspects of information security management, including specific performance measures in the senior managers' compacts that would allow assessment of their performance in managing these critical activities.**

Defragmentation and consolidation of information and communications technology resources

22. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its resolution 69/262, the General Assembly acknowledged that the lack of effective governance and leadership in the area of ICT had resulted in a high level of duplication and fragmentation of ICT functions within the Secretariat, and requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to reduce such fragmentation at all duty stations and field missions. In its resolution 71/272 B, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to pursue the

further consolidation and integration of ICT services of the Secretariat in accordance with the ICT strategy.

23. In this regard, the Advisory Committee further recalls that, in his previous report (A/71/400), the Secretary-General indicated that, during 2015 and 2016, the Broadcast and Conference Support Section (formerly of the Office of Central Support Services) and part of the Human Resources Information Systems Section (in the Office of Human Resources Management) and the Financial Information Operations Service (in the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts) had been integrated into the Office of Information and Communications Technology, and that further consolidation efforts were ongoing with respect to the ICT functions of the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Safety and Security and the remaining offices in the Department of Management. In his current report, the Secretary-General states that in 2018–2019 the Office of Information and Communications Technology will continue its efforts to consolidate and harmonize the ICT environment across the Secretariat and at all duty stations and field missions, including the transfer of seven posts and associated non-post resources from the Crisis Management Information Support Section of the Department of Safety and Security.

24. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the plans of the Secretariat to further reduce fragmentation included: (a) continued harmonization of applications, websites and service desks; (b) further harmonization of data centres and server rooms by leveraging the Enterprise Data Centres in Brindisi and Valencia; (c) increasing global sourcing; and (d) more rigorous application of strengthened ICT governance, policies, standards and architecture frameworks. The Committee was further informed that, if endorsed by the General Assembly, the proposed reorganization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology through the consolidation of the Information and Communications Technology Division of the Department of Field Support within the existing Office of Information and Communications Technology of the Department of Management would further reduce fragmentation and result in a more coherent and capable ICT organization (see paras. 3–4 above).

25. In its report, the Board of Auditors observed that, notwithstanding the issuance of an inter-office memorandum by the Chef de Cabinet in February 2016 seeking support and cooperation from the departments and heads of offices, progress in defragmentation and consolidation of ICT resources had been slow, with only 3 of 70 ICT units across the Secretariat having been consolidated as of January 2017, and that even the ICT units within the Department of Management had not yet been consolidated.

26. **The Advisory Committee is deeply concerned about the lack of progress made during the reporting period in the consolidation of ICT resources. The Committee reiterates that the cooperation of managers is critical for the successful implementation of the ICT strategy, and it expects them to cooperate and collaborate with the Chief Information Technology Officer in implementing defragmentation and consolidation of ICT capacities, which is one of the key objectives of the ICT strategy. The Committee further trusts that the Secretary-General will exercise strong leadership to ensure full compliance by all departments and entities of the Secretariat with the provisions of section II of General Assembly resolution 69/262, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to ensure that all Secretariat entities report to the Chief Information Technology Officer on all issues relating to ICT activities, resource management, standards, security, architecture, policies and guidance (see A/71/785, para. 33). The Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to take special measures to implement that resolution.**

Enterprise Applications Centres and application management

27. Information on the Enterprise Applications Centres and application management is provided in paragraphs 8 (b) and 35 to 50 of the report of the Secretary-General. The report indicates that the Centres are responsible for the development of enterprise solutions, which will increasingly replace multiple legacy systems. The number of legacy applications was reduced from 2,340 in 2014 to 1,220 in 2017 through the consolidation of functions under enterprise systems such as iNeed, Umoja and Inspira, and the decommissioning and retirement of obsolete systems. In addition, the Unite Mail project is accelerating the migration or retirement of legacy IBM Notes applications. The report indicates that the number of United Nations applications will be reduced to 1,000 by the end of 2020 (see A/72/755/Rev.1, annex II.C). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretariat aimed to reduce the total number of legacy systems to 300.

28. The report of the Secretary-General further states that the Enterprise Application Centres have undertaken a study to address the issue of the proliferation of applications and to provide a strategy to manage the Secretariat portfolio of applications. It is indicated that the study recognizes the need to provide software solutions on secure platforms to support implementation of substantive mandates, and that it is based on the use of cloud-based and "app-store"[5] technologies (ibid. para. 37). The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the next progress report is expected to include information on the outcome of the above-mentioned study, along with proposals for a new approach for managing a portfolio of applications. **The Advisory Committee looks forward to receiving further information and proposals on the application management strategy. The Committee is of the view that such a strategy should be based on clear Secretariat-wide application development policies and guidelines that clarify, inter alia, the functions and areas that are to be covered centrally by the Enterprise Application Centres and those which can be addressed at the local level.**

Application security and disaster recovery

29. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the Office of Information and Communications Technology has taken a firm stance against technology and data services that are not compliant with information security standards. Upon enquiry as to how compliance with information security standards was vetted and assured, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Office did not have the capacity to vet all ICT assets: while new systems, websites and infrastructure were vetted prior to implementation, and the information security of large enterprise systems such as Umoja, Inspira and iNeed was continually assessed based on evolving threats, legacy ICT assets comprising systems, websites and infrastructure implemented by offices and departments were assessed by local ICT offices and certified for compliance. The Committee was further informed that a systems contract had been made available to all offices and departments for such assessments of legacy systems and websites. Nevertheless, given the significant number of ICT systems and websites implemented over the past two decades outside of any formal ICT governance and standardization process, compliance of all ICT assets in the United Nations with information security standards was not assured. In its report, the Board of Auditors observed that most of the approximately 1,300 websites maintained across the Organization lacked standardization and were not in compliance with ICT policies on public websites, exposing the entire network to serious security risks.

[5] "App store" refers to an online platform for the electronic distribution of software applications ("apps"), often in a mobile context, such as the Apple App Store, Google Play and the Microsoft Store.

30. The previous report of the Secretary-General indicated that the number of critical systems requiring disaster recovery plans had been reduced from 171 to 24, and that disaster recovery capabilities had been implemented for 60 per cent of those systems. The Secretary-General also indicated that establishing disaster recovery capabilities for large-scale enterprise systems was resource intensive and would require further investment (see A/71/400, para. 21). In its report, the Board of Auditors observed that the list of 24 critical systems did not include 17 "mission critical" applications relating to the Department of Field Support or 40 legacy systems that had not yet been consolidated. The Board was of the view that, until the applications had been consolidated, they remained critical and the status of replacement of such applications needed to be closely monitored.

31. **The Advisory Committee is concerned by the large number of legacy applications, systems and websites that continue to present information security risks. The Committee notes the statement of the Secretary-General that migration to centrally hosted, global, standardized enterprise solutions systems is the primary means to defragment the legacy application landscape and reduce the number of legacy systems, which also results in greater economies of scale and improved security and reliability. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his next report a detailed update on the status of the remaining legacy systems, as well as a plan for accelerating the standardization and consolidation of legacy systems and websites. The Committee further recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to secure the full cooperation and collaboration of all Secretariat entities in support of this effort.**

Hosting and connectivity: Enterprise Data Centres

32. With regard to the hosting of applications, the report of the Secretary-General states that the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support have endorsed the adoption of cloud-based services based on a hybrid and multi-cloud approach. This would involve an on-premise, private cloud to host sensitive and critical applications and systems, and third-party, public cloud technologies for less sensitive systems. The report indicates that the cloud-based approach will enable better responsiveness to business demands and scalability, reduce risks related to infrastructure and compliance, and reduce future expenditure and capital requirements (see A/72/755/Rev.1, para. 57). **The Advisory Committee notes the adoption of a cloud-based approach for the hosting of applications at the United Nations. The Committee stresses the need for assurances regarding the protection and confidentiality of the Organization's data, and trusts that further information on this matter will be included in the next progress report (see paras. 17–21 above).**

D. Innovation: a digital agenda for the United Nations (phase two of the strategy)

33. Information on the initiatives under way in relation to the digital agenda is provided in paragraphs 69 to 85 of the report of the Secretary-General. The report states that phase two of the ICT strategy is focused on facilitating the core work of the United Nations in the areas of peace and security, human rights, the rule of law, social and economic development and humanitarian affairs. The report further states that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/262, in which the Assembly decided that the Chief Information Technology Officer should lead all ICT activities in the Secretariat, it is essential that ICT programmes supporting substantive work also become more harmonized. The report notes that, while the growth of the Internet and

increased connectivity worldwide offer opportunities to use technology and data in support of mandate implementation, those opportunities also represent a significant threat to the Organization, and require a holistic approach to cyber and physical security. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the next progress report will provide further information on the management of ICT solutions supporting the substantive work of the Organization.**

E. Optimization: global sourcing and global asset management

Global sourcing

34. Information on global sourcing is provided in paragraphs 86 to 88 of the report of the Secretary-General. The report indicates that, as part of the efforts to optimize, rationalize and harmonize ICT resource infrastructure and services across the ICT offices of the Secretariat, new global system contracts administered by the Operations Coordination Section of the Office of Information and Communications Technology have been established for: information technology equipment; voice, data and hosting cloud services; and enterprise software development and applications services accessible by multiple users in multiple locations across the Secretariat. The report further indicates that efforts towards global sourcing and contracts management continued during the third year of implementation, in a collaboration between the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the Information and Communications Technology Division of the Department of Field Support, other Secretariat offices and the Procurement Division. In this regard, it is indicated that a systems contract for the provision of geospatial service was awarded in 2016 and that additional systems contracts are currently being established for: (a) the provision of fully managed services such as email, storage, satellite network management and service desk; task order services; and integrated workforce services; (b) an application service global system contract for the provision of services through three delivery models, namely integrated workforce services, a retainer agreement and task orders; and (c) cloud computing services (see para. 33 above). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his next report further analysis and comparisons of the cost savings and economies of scale achieved for the equipment and services procured through systems contracts.**

Global asset management

35. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support undertook a review of assets and acquisitions in May and June 2016 in order to improve the visibility of both tangible and intangible assets. The report indicates that a central repository of all ICT assets is maintained in Umoja, including software licences, which are registered in Umoja as intangible assets. In addition, the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts are working together to establish a standard procedure for the identification and capitalization of intangible assets resulting from software development. The report states that all United Nations ICT assets are monitored and controlled throughout the life cycle of each item, from receipt to disposal, and that appropriate levels of authority for the management of physical and intangible assets are delegated by the Chief Information Technology Officer to the Regional Technology Centres. The report also provides some details on the overall inventory of ICT assets in peacekeeping operations. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the next progress report will provide further information on the oversight exercised by the Chief Information Technology Officer with regard to the acquisition and**

management of ICT assets (see paras. 10 and 13 above), as well as a more detailed analysis of the asset holdings, and their acquisition and disposal, including by type of asset.

F. Overview of financial resources

36. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that total ICT resources for 2018–2019 amount to $1,376.4 million, comprising $392.5 million under the regular budget, $54.5 million under the support account, $747.9 million under peacekeeping missions and $181.5 million in extrabudgetary resources. In addition, the total resources approved for Umoja for 2018–2019 amount to $77.6 million, reflecting a decrease of $21.4 million compared with the resources provided in 2016–2017 ($99.0 million). The report further states that, overall, the United Nations will allocate 3.6 per cent of its resources to ICT programmes and activities during 2018–2019. This reflects 7.3 per cent under the regular budget; 9.1 per cent under the support account; 5.8 per cent for peacekeeping missions; and 0.9 per cent under extrabudgetary resources (see A/72/755/Rev.1, paras 98–102 and annex I). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to further refine his analysis and include more detailed information on financial resources in future reports so as to improve transparency on the use of resources. The Committee trusts that, in addition to data by funding source, further analysis and breakdown of overall ICT expenditure by category of expenditure and purpose will be provided in the next progress report.**

G. Inventory of information and communications technology capacities

37. **The Advisory Committee continues to believe that there is a need to establish a baseline for the determination of ICT capacities across the Secretariat. Accordingly, the Committee has requested the Board of Auditors to conduct a comprehensive inventory of ICT capacities (see para. 38 below) and expenditures (such as posts, temporary assistance, contractors, consultants, services provided in-house, outsourced services, acquisition of hardware and maintenance costs) across the Secretariat to serve as a baseline of the current situation, from which to measure future progress and trends.**

38. **Furthermore, given the magnitude of resources expended on ICT annually, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in the budget and budget performance documents of each Secretariat entity information on its ICT expenditures and capacities, with details on elements such as ICT personnel (staff, individual contractors and contractual personnel), asset holdings (tangible and non-tangible), acquisition of goods and services, and ongoing and planned ICT projects and initiatives.**

V. Conclusions and recommendations

39. The action to be taken by the General Assembly is set out in paragraph 110 of the report of the Secretary-General. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the status of ongoing implementation of the ICT strategy, subject to the observations and recommendations of the Committee contained in the present report.**